City of Charlotte

Customer Satisfaction Survey – Land Development

Permitting Survey Results

Report – June 29, 2012

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City of Charlotte

2012 Land Development Customer Satisfaction Survey

Executive Summary

Project Description

Leadership from the City of Charlotte requested that Customer Service Solutions, Inc. (CSS) design, administer, and result a survey of the land development community to assess satisfaction with permitting functions. The survey created for this project is shown in the Appendix of this report. CSS used 5-point scales to measure three core aspects of the customer experience:

- **Staff-related Attributes**. These gauged aspects of staff professionalism, listening, understanding, and responsiveness.
- **Process-related Attributes**. These gauged aspects of process timeliness, ease of access, and ability to quickly get help.
- **Service-related Attributes**. These gauged satisfaction with specific services, consistency from plan review to inspections, clarity/quality of comments, and the respondent's overall willingness to recommend the City.

Open-ended questions were used to solicit more detailed responses. Specific targeted questions were also included as requested by City staff.

For a summary of the response rates from this project, please review the following:

- The Overall Response Rate for the survey (15.2%) was virtually the same as 2010 (15.5%) despite the fact that this year's survey was purely a web-based survey, and the 2010 survey was a combined web and hardcopy survey
- The 2010 response rate for the Web-based portion of the survey was 15.0%.

A	B	C = A-B	D	E	F	G	H = G/C
Total Contact Names	E-mail Bounces	Net E-mails Sent	Spam	Opt Out	Partial Surveys	Fully Completed Surveys	Response Rate
999	182	817	1	3	6	124	15.2%

CSS feels positive about the response level for this engagement – going from 69 responses in 2010 to 124 in 2012 was possible in large part to the improvement in quality of the database of contacts provided for the project.

Overall Assessment of Results

The following list of information represents some of the more significant findings from the project.

Overall Findings:

1) The highest rated attributes for Satisfaction are:
   a) Commercial pre-submittal meetings help me to submit more complete and accurate plans.
   b) City staff are consistently courteous.
   c) City staff are consistently professional.
2) The most significant overall concerns based on low ratings for Agreement with the statements were Process-focused: *I am satisfied with the length of time from when we submit plans until when we've heard the results of the review.* and *The City has a timely review process.*
3) 83% of respondents had been working with the City in permitting situations for more than 5 years.
4) 63% of respondents expect responses to calls or e-mails no later than the same day.
5) 58% of respondents prefer to communicate via e-mail, and only 6% prefer face-to-face meetings.

Results by Primary Viewpoint:

Commercial respondents are more satisfied with Land Development than Residential respondents. That satisfaction gap is greatest for two attributes where Commercial respondents:

- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT with the statement *City staff listen and understand my point of view before making their decision.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT with the statement *Commercial pre-submittal meetings help me to submit more complete and accurate plans.*

Results by Primary Role:

Design Professionals are more satisfied with Land Development than other respondents. That satisfaction gap is greatest for the following attributes, where Design Professionals are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT with the statements:

- *City staff listen and understand my point of view before making their decision.*
- *City staff listen to and resolve my issues fairly.*
- *The City has a timely inspections process.*
- *Plan review comments identify clearly what needs to be corrected to receive approvals.*

Correlation Coefficient Analysis

The following performance attributes or points of evaluation have the greatest impact on a respondent's willingness to recommend **the City of Charlotte:**

- *I am satisfied with the City's commercial Permitting Processes overall.*
- *City staff listen to and resolve my issues fairly.*
- *The City has a timely review process.*

Qualitative Evaluation based on Comments

The comments from this engagement were especially insightful. Respondents were very open about their likes, concerns, and suggestions for improvement. Among the key takeaways from the comments based on references made several times are the following:

- There's a perception that the relationship between CDOT and NCDOT is an issue. This was voiced in terms of ineffective communications and processes between the two groups.
- There were many CDOT-related comments, most from a negative perspective. We suggest that these be reviewed and shared to start identifying the root causes of the problems as the survey did not specify questions specific to this group.
- There was a high volume of comments about employees not returning phone call messages or responding to e-mails if at all. This is a significant frustration for respondents. It's interesting to note that attributes relating to responsiveness to these messages were among 3 of the 4 lowest rated Staff-related attributes. However, these responsiveness attributes mostly were rated in line with the Process attributes and above most of the Service attributes.
- Several comments noted that the staff are too "black and white" in decision-making.
- There were also several comments suggesting that the review fees seem excessively high.
- Multiple respondents conjectured that reviewers don't look at projects until the end of the stated review timeframe.
- There were a few comments about issues with the website (ease of finding information, system only running on Internet Explorer, etc.). However, there was not a great deal of consistency in the web-oriented concerns.
- While most of the comments showed concerns since the survey typically requested commentary on issues or suggestions for improvement, there were many positive comments provided by respondents. In some cases, customers recognized staff positively by name. The full comments are noted in the Appendix.

Recommended Priorities and Actions

We suggest that the City work through the detailed survey findings in the next section to look at customer responses in more detail and to develop additional ideas and priorities for improvement. This effort will also better explain from where CSS' recommendations were derived. The key recommendations from this report follow:

1) Refer the comments relating to the relationship between CDOT and NCDOT to those areas to review and discuss in a collaborative forum.
2) Review comments in detail relating to CDOT. As noted earlier, share these comments to start identifying root causes of the negative perceptions of the organization.
3) Remind staff about the need to be responsive to phone call and e-mail messages, responding no later than one business day. Note that over 60% of respondents request a same day call back, but ensuring at least a next day call back will be perceived as a great improvement to many customers.
4) Review the comments about staff being too "black and white" in decision-making, and determine if further research is required into what specifically are the concerns of respondents.
5) Review fee comments to determine if any adjustment is required and/or any improvement is needed in customer communications or the perception of value that customers receive for the dollar.
6) Research the respondent concern that "reviewers don't look at projects until the end of the stated review timeframe" to determine if this is the case and what – if anything – can be done with processes or communications to address this concern.
7) Recognize staff who were noted positively in comments for their great work and customer accolades.
8) Highlight with staff the success of the Commercial pre-submittal meetings. Recognize them for their great work on this process.
9) Review timeliness concerns relating to the overall review process and the time from submittal to results as these are the lowest of the 26 rated attributes.
10) Remind staff that only 6% of customers prefer face-to-face meetings, so look for opportunities to address issues and questions via e-mail or on the telephone unless face-to-face is vital to resolution.
11) Share with staff that – based on the Correlation analysis – if they "*listen to and resolve my issues fairly*" and "*listen and understand my point of view before making their decision*" that there is a much greater likelihood that the respondent will be willing to recommend the City as a good jurisdiction with which to work. Listening and patience mean a great deal to the customer base.
12) Perform internal benchmarking between Commercial and Residential review processes as ratings were consistently higher from the Commercial respondents. Perform a similar evaluation of how the department works with Design Professionals versus others as the Design Professionals are much more satisfied with Land Development Staff, Processes, and Services.
13) Repeat this survey in two years to review changes in customer perceptions as well as to gauge satisfaction and performance related to new services, changes in operation, or other performance improvement endeavors.

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Detailed Survey Findings and Result Reports

Reading and Interpreting the Survey Reports

Ratings are based on a 5-point scale with 5 being the highest rating and 1 being the lowest. For the Stratification reports, please note the following comments:

- Survey results from stratification categories containing 30 responses or greater were considered statistically valid and cited in CSS' creation of findings. These results can be confidently considered an accurate representation of their population.
- Survey results from stratification categories containing between 20 and 29 responses were also cited in CSS' creation of findings. However, the City is cautioned that these results do not meet statistical validity requirements, and cannot be reported as such.
- For the Stratification analyses, the "**Gap**" columns identify differences of ratings between data points in adjacent columns. A difference of 0.4 points will produce a Flag in that column for results. In the "Gap" columns:
  - If the rating for the left column(s) is higher than the rating for the right column(s), you will see a "D" indicating a downward trend moving from left to right.
  - If the rating for the left column(s) is lower than the rating for the right column(s), you will see a "U" indicating an upward trend moving from left to right.

City of Charlotte

2012 Land Development Customer Satisfaction Survey

Overall Results

Findings:

1) The highest rated attribute for Satisfaction is a Process-related attribute: Commercial pre-submittal meetings help me to submit more complete and accurate plans. (4.16)
2) The next three attributes of greatest satisfaction to respondents are Staff-related Attributes:
   a) City staff are consistently courteous. (4.15)
   b) City staff are consistently professional. (4.14)
   c) City staff listen and assist me with all ordinance-related questions. (4.07)
3) Only one Staff-related attribute was given a rating of 1-2 by at least 15% of respondents: City staff listen and understand my point of view before making their decision. (18.0%)
4) The most significant overall concerns based on low ratings for Agreement with the statements were:
   a) I am satisfied with the length of time from when we submit plans until when we've heard the results of the review. (2.93)
   b) The City has a timely review process. (2.98)
   c) I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Rezoning Process overall. (3.18)
   d) I am satisfied with the City's subdivision Permitting Processes overall. (3.18)
5) 83% of respondents had been working with the City in permitting situations for more than 5 years.
6) 72% of respondents were the primary contact for Plan Review/Permitting.
7) 18% of respondents were the primary contact for Inspections.
8) 63% of respondents expect responses to calls or e-mails no later than the same day.
9) 58% of respondents prefer to communicate via e-mail, and only 6% prefer face-to-face meetings.
10) 48% of respondents are in companies with 10 or fewer employees.

City of Charlotte - Land Development Permitting Customer Satisfaction Survey

Ratings based on a 5-Point Scale with 5 being highest

Overall Responses		Total Responses	Average Rating	Rank	% With 4 or 5 Rating	% With 1 or 2 Rating
Staff-related Attributes	City staff are consistently courteous.	123	**4.15**	1	88.6%	4.1%
	City staff are consistently professional.	123	**4.14**	2	84.6%	4.9%
	City staff listen and understand my point of view before making their decision.	122	3.60	6	64.8%	**18.0%**
	City staff listen and assist me with all ordinance-related questions.	122	**4.07**	3	82.8%	6.6%
	City staff listen to and resolve my issues fairly.	123	3.72	4	67.5%	12.2%
	The City of Charlotte Administrative Staff return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	120	3.58	7	63.3%	14.2%
	The City of Charlotte's Inspectors return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	90	3.56	8	56.7%	12.2%
	The City of Charlotte's Plan Review Staff return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	120	3.62	5	62.5%	14.2%
Process-related Attributes	Commercial pre-submittal meetings help me to submit more complete and accurate plans.	111	**4.16**	1	77.5%	4.5%
	I am pleased with my ability to quickly reach the right person to address the reason for my call.	122	3.72	2	67.2%	9.8%
	It is easy to access permit information via the Website.	116	3.61	5	62.9%	12.9%
	It is easy to check on the status of my review.	117	3.70	3	67.5%	11.1%
	It is easy to access other forms on the Website.	117	3.62	4	61.5%	9.4%
	It is easy to make payments.	83	3.57	6	56.6%	8.4%
	It is easy to schedule inspections.	63	3.49	7	49.2%	7.9%
	The City has a timely review process.	122	**2.98**	9	36.1%	**34.4%**
	I am satisfied with the length of time from when we submit plans until when we've heard the results of the review.	120	**2.93**	10	30.8%	**35.0%**
	The City has a timely inspections process.	72	3.28	8	40.3%	13.9%
Service-related Attributes	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Expedited Commercial Review Process.	84	3.56	2	53.6%	10.7%
	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Rezoning Process overall.	90	3.18	8	43.3%	**18.9%**
	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Urban District Review Process overall (incl. UMUD, MUDD, PED, TOD, RE-3, and TS).	82	3.39	4	43.9%	12.2%
	I am satisfied with the City's commercial Permitting Processes overall.	111	3.41	3	55.0%	**17.1%**
	I am satisfied with the City's subdivision Permitting Processes overall.	82	3.18	7	40.2%	**22.0%**
	I would tell other building professionals that the City of Charlotte is a good jurisdiction in which to work.	121	3.28	6	57.0%	**25.6%**
	Plan review comments identify clearly what needs to be corrected to receive approvals.	118	3.61	1	67.8%	13.6%
	There is consistency between what's approved during the City plan review process and what's approved by City field inspectors.	99	3.28	5	46.5%	**21.2%**

City of Charlotte - Land Development Permitting Customer Satisfaction Survey

Ratings based on a 5-Point Scale with 5 being highest

Overall Responses		Total Responses	Average Rating	Rank	% With 4 or 5 Rating	% With 1 or 2 Rating
Did you participate in a survey very similar to this two years ago?	Yes	20	17%			
	No	65	55%			
	Not Sure	33	28%			
How long have you been working with the City in permitting situations?	Less than 1 year	9	8%			
	1-2 years	7	6%			
	3-5 years	4	3%			
	More than 5 years	98	83%			
Are you typically a primary contact for plan reviews/permitting?			72%	% Yes		
Are you typically a primary contact for inspections?			18%	% Yes		
How quickly do you expect to get a response after leaving an e-mail or voice message with someone at the City offices?	30 minutes	0	0%			
	2 hours	9	9%			
	Same Day	55	54%			
	Next Day	38	37%			
How do you prefer to communicate with the City personnel?	E-mail	67	58%			
	Phone	42	36%			
	Face-to-face meeting	7	6%			
About how many employees does your company have on payroll?	1-10	57	48%			
	11-25	22	19%			
	26-50	9	8%			
	51-100	5	4%			
	Over 100	25	21%			
About how many times did you submit a new project to the City of Charlotte within the past 12 months (this could include Subdivision, Expedited Commercial, Urban District, etc.)?	0-5	73	62%			
	6-10	27	23%			
	11-20	11	9%			
	Over 20	6	5%			

TOTAL

City of Charlotte

2012 Land Development Customer Satisfaction Survey

Stratifications - Results by Primary Viewpoint

Generally speaking, Commercial respondents are more satisfied with Land Development than Residential respondents. Comparing Commercial respondents to the Residential respondents, Commercial respondents:

- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.73 v. 3.04) with the statement *City staff listen and understand my point of view before making their decision.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.82 v. 3.33) with the statement *City staff listen to and resolve my issues fairly.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (4.26 v. 3.65) with the statement *Commercial pre-submittal meetings help me to submit more complete and accurate plans.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.79 v. 3.35) with the statement *It is easy to check on the status of my review.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.72 v. 3.17) with the statement *It is easy to access other forms on the Website.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.07 v. 2.58) with the statement *The City has a timely review process.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.02 v. 2.57) with the statement *I am satisfied with the length of time from when we submit plans until when we've heard the results of the review.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.64 v. 3.08) with the statement *I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Expedited Commercial Review Process.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.49 v. 2.94) with the statement *I am satisfied with the City's commercial Permitting Processes overall.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.37 v. 2.95) with the statement *There is consistency between what's approved during the City plan review process and what's approved by City field inspectors.*

City of Charlotte - Land Development Permitting Customer Satisfaction Survey

Ratings based on a 5-Point Scale with 5 being highest

Responses by Primary Viewpoint		*Commercial (100)*	*Residential (24)*	**GAP**
Staff-related Attributes	City staff are consistently courteous.	4.18	4.00	
	City staff are consistently professional.	4.20	3.88	
	City staff listen and understand my point of view before making their decision.	3.73	3.04	**D**
	City staff listen and assist me with all ordinance-related questions.	4.13	3.83	
	City staff listen to and resolve my issues fairly.	3.82	3.33	**D**
	The City of Charlotte Administrative Staff return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.60	3.50	
	The City of Charlotte's Inspectors return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.61	3.35	
	The City of Charlotte's Plan Review Staff return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.62	3.61	
Process-related Attributes	Commercial pre-submittal meetings help me to submit more complete and accurate plans.	4.26	3.65	**D**
	I am pleased with my ability to quickly reach the right person to address the reason for my call.	3.77	3.52	
	It is easy to access permit information via the Website.	3.68	3.35	
	It is easy to check on the status of my review.	3.79	3.35	**D**
	It is easy to access other forms on the Website.	3.72	3.17	**D**
	It is easy to make payments.	3.63	3.31	
	It is easy to schedule inspections.	3.54	3.35	
	The City has a timely review process.	3.07	2.58	**D**
	I am satisfied with the length of time from when we submit plans until when we've heard the results of the review.	3.02	2.57	**D**
	The City has a timely inspections process.	3.35	3.06	
Service-related Attributes	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Expedited Commercial Review Process.	3.64	3.08	**D**
	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Rezoning Process overall.	3.23	3.00	
	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Urban District Review Process overall (incl. UMUD, MUDD, PED, TOD, RE-3, and TS).	3.44	3.19	
	I am satisfied with the City's commercial Permitting Processes overall.	3.49	2.94	**D**
	I am satisfied with the City's subdivision Permitting Processes overall.	3.25	3.00	
	I would tell other building professionals that the City of Charlotte is a good jurisdiction in which to work.	3.31	3.17	
	Plan review comments identify clearly what needs to be corrected to receive approvals.	3.67	3.38	
	There is consistency between what's approved during the City plan review process and what's approved by City field inspectors.	3.37	2.95	**D**
Are you typically a primary contact for plan reviews/permitting?		69%	86%	
Are you typically a primary contact for inspections?		16%	27%	

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2012 Land Development Customer Satisfaction Survey

Stratifications - Results by Primary Role

Generally speaking, Design Professionals are more satisfied with Land Development than other respondents. Comparing Design Professionals to the other respondents, Design Professionals:

- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.79 v. 3.16) with the statement *City staff listen and understand my point of view before making their decision.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (4.25 v. 3.69) with the statement *City staff listen and assist me with all ordinance-related questions.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.94 v. 3.15) with the statement *City staff listen to and resolve my issues fairly.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (4.33 v. 3.88) with the statement *Commercial pre-submittal meetings help me to submit more complete and accurate plans.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.58 v. 2.97) with the statement *The City has a timely inspections process.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.34 v. 2.82) with the statement *I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Rezoning Process overall.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.58 v. 3.00) with the statement *I am satisfied with the City's commercial Permitting Processes overall.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.37 v. 2.92) with the statement *I would tell other building professionals that the City of Charlotte is a good jurisdiction in which to work.*
- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.83 v. 3.16) with the statement *Plan review comments identify clearly what needs to be corrected to receive approvals.*

City of Charlotte - Land Development Permitting Customer Satisfaction Survey

Ratings based on a 5-Point Scale with 5 being highest

Responses by Primary Role		*Design Professionals (72)*	*All Others (40)*	**GAP**
Staff-related Attributes	City staff are consistently courteous.	4.21	3.90	
	City staff are consistently professional.	4.18	3.90	
	City staff listen and understand my point of view before making their decision.	3.79	3.16	**D**
	City staff listen and assist me with all ordinance-related questions.	4.25	3.69	**D**
	City staff listen to and resolve my issues fairly.	3.94	3.15	**D**
	The City of Charlotte Administrative Staff return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.61	3.51	
	The City of Charlotte's Inspectors return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.59	3.48	
	The City of Charlotte's Plan Review Staff return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.58	3.47	
Process-related Attributes	Commercial pre-submittal meetings help me to submit more complete and accurate plans.	4.33	3.88	**D**
	I am pleased with my ability to quickly reach the right person to address the reason for my call.	3.82	3.50	
	It is easy to access permit information via the Website.	3.69	3.60	
	It is easy to check on the status of my review.	3.71	3.79	
	It is easy to access other forms on the Website.	3.64	3.62	
	It is easy to make payments.	3.51	3.73	
	It is easy to schedule inspections.	3.40	3.63	
	The City has a timely review process.	3.06	2.71	
	I am satisfied with the length of time from when we submit plans until when we've heard the results of the review.	2.99	2.70	
	The City has a timely inspections process.	3.58	2.97	**D**
Service-related Attributes	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Expedited Commercial Review Process.	3.62	3.41	
	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Rezoning Process overall.	3.34	2.82	**D**
	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Urban District Review Process overall (incl. UMUD, MUDD, PED, TOD, RE-3, and TS).	3.50	3.15	
	I am satisfied with the City's commercial Permitting Processes overall.	3.58	3.00	**D**
	I am satisfied with the City's subdivision Permitting Processes overall.	3.26	3.00	
	I would tell other building professionals that the City of Charlotte is a good jurisdiction in which to work.	3.37	2.92	**D**
	Plan review comments identify clearly what needs to be corrected to receive approvals.	3.83	3.16	**D**
	There is consistency between what's approved during the City plan review process and what's approved by City field inspectors.	3.42	3.06	
Are you typically a primary contact for plan reviews/permitting?		90%	41%	
Are you typically a primary contact for inspections?		10%	38%	

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Stratifications - Results by Whether Respondent is Primary Contact for Plan Reviews/Permitting

Comparing respondents who are typically Primary Contacts for Plan Review/Permitting request to those who are NOT Primary Contacts, those who **are typically Primary Contacts**:

- Are in significantly MORE AGREEMENT (3.87 v. 3.31) with the statement *City staff listen to and resolve my issues fairly.*
- Are in significantly LESS AGREEMENT (3.38 v. 4.00) with the statement *It is easy to make payments.*

City of Charlotte - Land Development Permitting Customer Satisfaction Survey

Ratings based on a 5-Point Scale with 5 being highest

Responses by Primary Contact for Plan Review/Permitting		*Primary (86)*	*Not Primary (33)*	**GAP**
Staff-related Attributes	City staff are consistently courteous.	4.20	3.97	
	City staff are consistently professional.	4.16	4.00	
	City staff listen and understand my point of view before making their decision.	3.73	3.34	
	City staff listen and assist me with all ordinance-related questions.	4.13	3.88	
	City staff listen to and resolve my issues fairly.	3.87	3.31	**D**
	The City of Charlotte Administrative Staff return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.59	3.47	
	The City of Charlotte's Inspectors return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.61	3.43	
	The City of Charlotte's Plan Review Staff return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.64	3.47	
Process-related Attributes	Commercial pre-submittal meetings help me to submit more complete and accurate plans.	4.17	4.17	
	I am pleased with my ability to quickly reach the right person to address the reason for my call.	3.74	3.61	
	It is easy to access permit information via the Website.	3.55	3.70	
	It is easy to check on the status of my review.	3.62	3.89	
	It is easy to access other forms on the Website.	3.55	3.75	
	It is easy to make payments.	3.38	4.00	**U**
	It is easy to schedule inspections.	3.36	3.71	
	The City has a timely review process.	2.98	2.94	
	I am satisfied with the length of time from when we submit plans until when we've heard the results of the review.	2.88	3.00	
	The City has a timely inspections process.	3.38	3.04	
Service-related Attributes	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Expedited Commercial Review Process.	3.53	3.65	
	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Rezoning Process overall.	3.23	3.13	
	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Urban District Review Process overall (incl. UMUD, MUDD, PED, TOD, RE-3, and TS).	3.43	3.21	
	I am satisfied with the City's commercial Permitting Processes overall.	3.45	3.25	
	I am satisfied with the City's subdivision Permitting Processes overall.	3.10	3.40	
	I would tell other building professionals that the City of Charlotte is a good jurisdiction in which to work.	3.33	3.16	
	Plan review comments identify clearly what needs to be corrected to receive approvals.	3.64	3.48	
	There is consistency between what's approved during the City plan review process and what's approved by City field inspectors.	3.31	3.20	
Are you typically a primary contact for plan reviews/permitting?		100%	0%	
Are you typically a primary contact for inspections?		20%	15%	

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Stratifications - Results by # of Employees

There were no significant differences in ratings based on the size of the companies that respondents represented.

City of Charlotte - Land Development Permitting Customer Satisfaction Survey

Ratings based on a 5-Point Scale with 5 being highest

Responses by # Employees		*1-10 (57)*	*Over 10 (67)*	**GAP**
Staff-related Attributes	City staff are consistently courteous.	4.20	4.10	
	City staff are consistently professional.	4.13	4.15	
	City staff listen and understand my point of view before making their decision.	3.57	3.62	
	City staff listen and assist me with all ordinance-related questions.	4.07	4.08	
	City staff listen to and resolve my issues fairly.	3.64	3.79	
	The City of Charlotte Administrative Staff return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.69	3.49	
	The City of Charlotte's Inspectors return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.58	3.54	
	The City of Charlotte's Plan Review Staff return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.65	3.58	
Process-related Attributes	Commercial pre-submittal meetings help me to submit more complete and accurate plans.	4.27	4.07	
	I am pleased with my ability to quickly reach the right person to address the reason for my call.	3.68	3.76	
	It is easy to access permit information via the Website.	3.64	3.59	
	It is easy to check on the status of my review.	3.80	3.62	
	It is easy to access other forms on the Website.	3.61	3.62	
	It is easy to make payments.	3.53	3.59	
	It is easy to schedule inspections.	3.40	3.55	
	The City has a timely review process.	2.84	3.09	
	I am satisfied with the length of time from when we submit plans until when we've heard the results of the review.	2.87	2.98	
	The City has a timely inspections process.	3.20	3.33	
Service-related Attributes	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Expedited Commercial Review Process.	3.57	3.55	
	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Rezoning Process overall.	3.00	3.31	
	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Urban District Review Process overall (incl. UMUD, MUDD, PED, TOD, RE-3, and TS).	3.24	3.50	
	I am satisfied with the City's commercial Permitting Processes overall.	3.44	3.38	
	I am satisfied with the City's subdivision Permitting Processes overall.	3.23	3.15	
	I would tell other building professionals that the City of Charlotte is a good jurisdiction in which to work.	3.20	3.35	
	Plan review comments identify clearly what needs to be corrected to receive approvals.	3.78	3.47	
	There is consistency between what's approved during the City plan review process and what's approved by City field inspectors.	3.39	3.20	
Are you typically a primary contact for plan reviews/permitting?		74%	71%	
Are you typically a primary contact for inspections?		18%	19%	

City of Charlotte

2012 Land Development Customer Satisfaction Survey

Stratifications - Results by # of Projects Submitted in Past 12 Months

While ratings were generally higher for respondents who were with organizations that had submitted more than 5 projects in the past 12 months, none of the attributes had a significant difference (0.40 points or greater) in Agreement ratings.

City of Charlotte - Land Development Permitting Customer Satisfaction Survey

Ratings based on a 5-Point Scale with 5 being highest

Responses by # Times Submit New Project in Past 12 Months		*0-5 (73)*	*Over 5 (51)*	**GAP**
Staff-related Attributes	City staff are consistently courteous.	4.10	4.22	
	City staff are consistently professional.	4.07	4.24	
	City staff listen and understand my point of view before making their decision.	3.49	3.76	
	City staff listen and assist me with all ordinance-related questions.	3.96	4.24	
	City staff listen to and resolve my issues fairly.	3.58	3.92	
	The City of Charlotte Administrative Staff return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.62	3.53	
	The City of Charlotte's Inspectors return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.49	3.64	
	The City of Charlotte's Plan Review Staff return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.	3.61	3.63	
Process-related Attributes	Commercial pre-submittal meetings help me to submit more complete and accurate plans.	4.06	4.30	
	I am pleased with my ability to quickly reach the right person to address the reason for my call.	3.69	3.76	
	It is easy to access permit information via the Website.	3.54	3.71	
	It is easy to check on the status of my review.	3.75	3.64	
	It is easy to access other forms on the Website.	3.63	3.60	
	It is easy to make payments.	3.60	3.53	
	It is easy to schedule inspections.	3.49	3.50	
	The City has a timely review process.	2.99	2.96	
	I am satisfied with the length of time from when we submit plans until when we've heard the results of the review.	2.91	2.96	
	The City has a timely inspections process.	3.15	3.50	
Service-related Attributes	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Expedited Commercial Review Process.	3.50	3.64	
	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Rezoning Process overall.	3.18	3.18	
	I am satisfied with the City of Charlotte's Urban District Review Process overall (incl. UMUD, MUDD, PED, TOD, RE-3, and TS).	3.22	3.59	
	I am satisfied with the City's commercial Permitting Processes overall.	3.34	3.50	
	I am satisfied with the City's subdivision Permitting Processes overall.	3.18	3.19	
	I would tell other building professionals that the City of Charlotte is a good jurisdiction in which to work.	3.18	3.42	
	Plan review comments identify clearly what needs to be corrected to receive approvals.	3.53	3.73	
	There is consistency between what's approved during the City plan review process and what's approved by City field inspectors.	3.21	3.37	
Are you typically a primary contact for plan reviews/permitting?		62%	89%	
Are you typically a primary contact for inspections?		18%	20%	

Projects

City of Charlotte

2012 Land Development Customer Satisfaction Survey

Correlation Analysis

Description of Thresholds Used in the Statistical Correlation Analysis:

CSS generated Correlation Coefficients between a key attribute in the survey and all other attribute ratings to identify any attributes that consistently correlated to the ratings for the key attribute. The key attribute was:

"I would tell other building professionals that the City of Charlotte is a good jurisdiction in which to work."

Attributes showing a positive correlation of 0.8 or greater were considered to have **a definitive impact on** the related item, and attributes showing a positive correlation of 0.50 to 0.79 were considered to have a **potential bearing on** the related item.

Drivers of Customer Willingness to Recommend to Others

1) There were no performance attributes or points of evaluation that have a definitive impact on a respondent's willingness to recommend the City of Charlotte to others.
2) Top performance attributes/points of evaluation with the highest potential bearing on a respondent's willingness to recommend follow:
   a) *I am satisfied with the City's commercial Permitting Processes overall.* 0.75
   b) *City staff listen to and resolve my issues fairly.* 0.74
   c) *The City has a timely review process.* 0.71
   d) *I am satisfied with the length of time from when we submit plans until when we've heard the results of the review.* 0.69
   e) *City staff listen and understand my point of view before making their decision.* 0.68

City of Charlotte

2012 Land Development Customer Satisfaction Survey

Appendix

A. Respondents Requesting Callbacks
B. Full Listing of Comments
C. Cover E-mail and Original Survey

City of Charlotte

2012 Land Development Customer Satisfaction Survey

Respondents Requesting Call Backs

The following respondents requested a call back from the City of Charlotte.

- phobbs@sitesolutionspa.com
  - Phillip Hobbs
  - Site Solutions
  - 704 521-9880
- chuckmcg3@aol.com
  - Charles McGovern
  - Innovative Medical Inc.
  - 704-905-2451
- stuart@proffittdixon.com (I verified that the information below for this respondent is from the person who completed the survey sent to "stuart@...")
  - Ken Walsh
  - Jones Lang LaSalle
  - 704-650-2524
  - ken.walsh@am.jll.com
- bupton@isaacsgrp.com
  - Brian Upton
  - The Isaacs Group
  - 704-227-9406
- jrudolph57@gmail.com
  - John Rudolph
  - 704-372-8000

City of Charlotte

2012 Land Development Customer Satisfaction Survey

Full Listing of Survey Comments

The comments provided by respondents are listed here and divided into several sections:

- Primary Role as Customer of Land Development - Other
- Staff-related Comments
- Process-related Comments
- Service-related Comments
- How quickly you expect to get a response after leaving an e-mail or voice message with someone at the City offices - Other
- How you prefer to communicate with the City personnel - Other
- Comments on Ordinance Alignment
- What the City of Charlotte Land Development Department do to better serve you

As you will see, many respondents filled in various comments wherever they could fit them, so the responses do not always match the topic heading.

These comments were not paraphrased or modified (except for spelling/clarity) by CSS. They are presented here as closely as possible to what respondents offered.

City of Charlotte

2012 Land Development Customer Satisfaction Survey

Full Listing of Survey Comments

Primary Role as Customer of Land Development - Other:

- Architect Employee
- Church Expansion
- Engineer
- Facility committee member
- Land Surveyor (7)
- Owner's Representative/Consultant

Staff-related Comments:

- 1. There needs to be a better system between CDOT and NCDOT. There should be better coordination between the two agencies to facilitate one-stop-permitting. 2. The ACCELA website does not update progress regularly. After spending time to pull the data on web, I still have to call to get the updated information.
- Additional staffing may be necessary in order to improve customer service (i.e., responses to inquiries) in the Zoning Administrator's Office.
- Better training for using city computer systems for contractors in the field. Better communications between city changing ordinances rules codes and contractors working in the field.
- Building Inspectors don't communicate the level of inspections required.
- City staff is consistently professional and responsive.
- Following thru with info provided in pre-submittal meetings and also being more realistic on impacts for revisions to approved plans. It seems that Charlotte doesn't want anyone to develop with all the restrictions and having "no" flexibility. No site ever fits all the development constraints.
- I appreciate the opportunity to communicate and to submit materials electronically.
- I consider timely as being within 2 business days without further follow up. Most calls to inspectors, from any department, take a minimum of 3 days with at least one follow-up to get a return call. This applies even if you are returning a call they made to you.
- I feel that it is very difficult to get responses out of upper level staff on clarification type of items.
- I found that Staff is more of an impediment to the process. Additional cost by me for silly nonsensical items that have little to no value from a common sense perspective. They are good readers as all they will do is point to the ordinance and read. Not everything falls neatly into the black or white box. It is there where Staff fails.
- I have a hard time getting staff to call back within 24 hours, which I believe to be a good standard. I often have gone weeks without a call back until I call multiple times and/or call someone's supervisor.
- I think in general, all employees should take the position that anyone in the community who is taking risk, etc., should be appreciated, and the general tone when dealing with them should be more "Let's see how we can help you get what you need within our guidelines, codes and rules." Less of the "sorry, we don't care about the amount of jobs at stake etc."

- If staff had any practical experience, they would be more attuned to the issues that private industry has to deal with. With staff, there is nothing but black or white. There is no middle ground.
- In general I found the Staff willing to assist with problems, issues and concerns. I found Staff to be highly professional in their manner and willing to take the time to understand the nuances of my project. I am a satisfied customer.
- In general the reviewers are great; the inspectors are very good but have some inconsistencies. The administrative people in the 3 or 4 times I've called either don't call back or act like I'm an idiot.
- It took almost 4 months to resolve a parking issue. Honestly, the timeframe makes no sense and mortgage payment had to be made while I waited. I never had a sense of urgency or even the impression that the city employee I was dealing with wanted to handle it promptly.
- Lack of common sense.
- Leadership starts at the top. Do they actually believe I might be right? Do they believe their job is to 'catch me' or keep me from doing something they think is bad? Or do they honestly believe, from the top down, that the City's job is to see that I meet code (not their personal empires' goals). Berry Miller is the only staff member who gets it.
- Many interpretations are made in the field during or after construction. This is time consuming and costly. The plan review process needs to be improved so issues are resolved during plan review not in the field.
- My primary focus and interest is in plan review. All staff in the Land Development departments are very professional, knowledgeable and courteous. The challenge will be to maintain that level of excellent service and response as development increases (hopefully).
- Other than the occasional over-reaching for tree-related issues and the street improvement delays, we have been well-served.
- Please include/consult planning staff on commercial pre-submittal meetings.
- Response time needs to be improved. Plan reviewers need to be more knowledgeable about all code matters.
- Return calls and emails within 1 business day.
- Return phone calls and e-mails - period!
- Simplifying the code as it relates to landscaping. Zoning, Tree Ordinance, and PCCO all have different landscape requirements that overlap, and we're not always sure who has authority.
- Some staff members are great at returning phone calls, but some either do not return calls or take weeks to do so.
- Staff is often inaccessible for days at a time. Phone calls are not returned promptly and often not returned at all...often lucky to get a return call up to a week later. Same for e-mail. Also we often find that WE seem to know the codes/ordinance better than the reviewer as they often "don't know" or will answer with a "guess" not based on code.
- Staff just reads code back to you. Code does not apply in all situations. Staff needs to be flexible. Black and white enforcement of code results in lost business for the city; developable land becomes undevelopable.
- Staff members are often very difficult to get in contact with, and it may be a week or two before a call or email is returned, if ever. Staff does not stick to their word, in many cases, and will "reconsider" their position causing major plan changes. Overall, staff gives the impression that Charlotte does not care whether new development happens.
- Staff should fully understand that our form of government serves the public, not the agency.
- Staff was very responsive and well-prepared for meeting. Previous phases of this building were part of the discussions. Some information known to staff and not known by the design staff proved to be very helpful in compiling a comprehensive review of the site.
- The coordination between CDOT and NCDOT is tenuous at best. This poor relationship causes permit/construction delays.

- The cost, schedule and overall review process is way out of control. It has cost my clients more in review fees than they paid for the design and drawing fees.
- The return phone calls or emails could be listed as neutral or agree. It all depends on the reviewer. Reviewers such as Felix Obregon and Robert Zink are good at responding while others are not. This is one of the biggest frustrations I experience as a designer. Our clients want quick answers, and some City reviewers wait too long to respond.
- Thin ranks, I understand, but during the design/permitting process, we (as design professionals) are on a very tight schedule most times. Return calls from reviewers more quickly would be beneficial. Also, reviewers should pick up the phone to discuss issues before disapproving plans. Sometimes a simple explanation is all that is needed.
- Time is not as important to staff as to the private sector. Time to us is money.
- We have only had a pre-submittal meeting, so too early in process to have suggestions. So far, experience has been good.
- With regard to Planning and Engineering, calls and emails are returned in a reasonable time. However CDOT returns calls and emails in an unreasonable amount of time, up to a week later and sometimes not at all.

Process-related Comments:

- 1. Discrepancies exist between Accela review completion date and actual completion of review. Reviews should be completed no later than date per Accela, as owners closely monitor. 2. Be more specific regarding review time i.e. - 15 working day minimum does not include your "processing time," and this should be included or allowed for i.e. - 18 days.
- Accessing information online made follow-up and checking the status much easier; was told my permit was ready and to come down to pay for it and pick it up. When I got there - taking time off from work - I was told that the department that called was wrong, and it wasn't even approved yet.
- As stated, we are normally "under the gun", so any review time is too long. However, compared to other municipalities we have worked in, Charlotte is one of the best.
- Because of reduced staff, electrical inspection is taking too long.
- Better communications with inspectors and city staff concerning permitting plan review, etc.
- Certain departments (Planning and CDOT) consistently exceed the review deadline, sometimes up to a week late. This could be due to workload, but my clients are expecting comments/approval on a certain day, and a week impacts construction schedules.
- Design requirements should be simplified with adoption of compliance statements from the designer verses long review and approval processes. Non-compliance identified after construction should be penalized. No local law should be more restrictive than State law.
- For small sites, the review process takes longer than the design process, and review fees paid to the City are sometimes more than the design fees. As-built review at project completion also seems to take a long time when the owner is trying to obtain a certificate of occupancy.
- I believe some additional time came from driveway maintenance issues.
- I do not like the new web site. It is difficult to find the information sometimes. It would also be more helpful to have permit forms in Word so they can be filled in on the computer. The reviewers can be pretty evasive on answers and direction on matters. They also don't always coordinate internally.
- I notice a lot of inconsistency in the amount of time it takes to receive permits for similar projects. I recently submitted two similar projects, one was reviewed and approved in two weeks, the other took over eight. This makes it difficult to plan schedules.
- In a recent submittal, all departments (Planning, Engineering, Erosion, Urban Forestry, CDOT etc.) stepped up to the plate and met my client's needs in a exceptional manner. All were willing to review resubmittals quickly, substitute drawings, discuss issues and process information expeditiously. I was most impressed. The EPlan process worked well.
- In most cases it seems as though plans are not reviewed until the last couple days of the allotted period of time, and because of this I feel that in some cases a thorough review may not be given the first time through causing the review process to be elongated.
- In my opinion, the 15 working day review period is too long. Hire more staff and get this down to 5 days. My sense of the process is the reviewers wait until the 15th day to begin their review, things are missed and have to be addressed on a second or third review. This costs the development community time and money.
- No comments.
- Plan reviewers should not wait the entire review cycle when the comments are minor.
- Pre-submittal meetings are very helpful. However, all departments need to be represented. I have been to meetings where CDOT was not represented, and it really diminished the value of the meeting. If you review a site at the meeting, and CDOT later tells you that the driveway won't work, the value of the meeting was greatly diminished.
- Resubmittals for minor comments should go quicker. Often reviewers that approved the project in the first submittal are asked to re-review in the second submittal. These re-reviews are 5 minute exercises that don't

get done for 15 days. These should be flagged to alert the reviewer so that they can work them in early as time allows.

- Return calls more quickly so scheduling can be initiated more quickly.
- Review time is 3 weeks, but many reviewers don't look at the project until the very last day. Could this be scheduled better and reduce the time (weeks) that the project sits before the review begins? Review should be more PROACTIVE where the reviewer contacts the designer with any questions during the review rather than a redline QUESTION.
- Reviewers take the entire allotted time for their review no matter how little review is required. A call to check on the status of a review is met with "don't talk to me until the 30 day deadline has been reached." Reviewers look for places that they can require measures where the benefits and even the applicability of the code is questionable.
- See comments item 4 above. 3. I recently waited days for the permit to be "issued" after all the reviewers had approved the plans and signed off. The admin part should be in 15 day review cycle. 4. I don't understand why reviewers don't get to see the resubmitted plans until day 13 or 14. Often the comment is to add a note, not design revisions.
- So an engineer puts the lot number on his certification of framing, and the inspector turns it down because he failed to put the street address? Give me a break. This is service when permits are at the levels they are?
- Some decisions made in presubmittal meetings are not firm enough and change during review. The electronic system does not clearly show start and end dates for each review cycle. A 21 business day cycle essentially ends up being 30 days. A second review, even on simple things, ends up at two months.
- Some departments are more timely with their reviews than others.
- Still too angry about the last submittal to elaborate. <NAME> is clueless. Issue #2: How can the City require & issue a permit to work on a private street then argue with us that we've turned the street over when we know we haven't. The City does not have the right to allow an underground contractor to enter private property. <NAME2> is clueless.
- Stop trying to be more like California. I know, I came from there with over 18 years of experience. Everything is not black and white; there are some gray areas. Downsize the inexperienced, hire less people with more knowledge about codes and administration that also have a servant heart. This is not us against them mindset.
- The Charlotte development process is difficult, and bureaucratic. It does not make sense to me that zoning does not review plans until building plans are submitted. A zoning reviewer could comment on something that the City has already approved, causing a plan change that requires repermitting.
- The forms and checklists section of the Development process new website can be cumbersome to navigate. The old version, while more spread out, was easier to find some of the documents that you need.
- The process was better than most, especially considering the size of the jurisdiction.
- There is no single point of contact that can explain the entire permitting process. Each individual knows their role in the process, but no one can tell you the entire process that includes CTAC submittals to Mecklenburg County.
- This could be an anomaly but that 7-11 surge for CTAC really put them behind!
- This is where it would be great if the city did a questionnaire on CDOT, the comments would be much more interesting.
- This may not directly relate to land development - but I think the City's process of being able to pay for scheduled inspections is a money grab and totally unfair and discriminatory. Recently we had to wait several days for an electrical inspection because he had 10 other "paid reserved" inspections that "must" come 1st. It feels like extortion!
- This project is not ready for construction. It should begin in July.

- We have only had a pre-submittal meeting, so too early in process to have suggestions. So far, experience has been good.
- Why does it cost more to review a minor subdivision plat than it does to survey & prepare the plat?
- Your new system only runs on Internet Explorer. It doesn't work on a Macintosh, firefox, chrome or safari. This inhibits our business.

Service-related Comments:

- 1. Fee payments - Why do you insist on a check prior to review? If the check is not exactly correct, you refuse to review until the check is correct, thus costing time and money. Instead, why not allow the project to be submitted, and then issue a fee amount at end of first review? Seems more efficient for all parties that way.
- As a civil engineer designer, it would be helpful to have zoning/building standards review our plans concurrently with engineering. Sometimes issues come up with zoning that may affect our engineering approval. Also, the rezoning process is a little long. But with community involvement, I am not sure it can be shortened.
- Compared to the Towns in Mecklenburg County (such as Huntersville), the City provides excellent service. I just wish Mecklenburg County LUESA had the same level of service as the City.
- Could improve express process by making it similar to City of Raleigh which grants permits the same day you review.
- Different code and palpitations between inspectors and plan review and staff very bad.
- EPM was not reviewed sufficiently before being launched for subdivision plats.
- E-submittals are working great. There are too many regulations for Urban Forestry. It makes developing very difficult. CDOT needs to be more responsive. Coordination between CDOT and NCDOT needs significant improvements. The process is cumbersome and needlessly difficult - delivering permits to NCDOT and picking up and returning to the City.
- Field inspectors ought to communicate w/plan reviewers on why something got approved in office! Owners and G.C.'s are frustrated and don't like hearing "well...it was approved @ plan review!"
- I do not understand why there is not a zoning review through the City of Charlotte with the commercial review process. The only way a zoning review is completed on a commercial process is when the building is submitted. Because the building plans do not correlate with engineering review, this adds additional time, costs and room for error.
- Minor comments should be able to be redlined without having to resubmit. Stormwater design does not transfer to max. stormwater fee credits. Ponds designed to the stormwater manual will not receive a volume credit. Why do you need an engineer to design Tc if your reviewers will not accept anything but a 5 min. Tc for post flows for fee credits?
- More effort and thought should be invested to revise policy to place more responsibility on the engineer and decrease the need for cumbersome approval processes and requirements.
- MUDD review is a bit confusing compared to the standard review process. Why not make the review processes the same instead of having a different process? I don't see the benefit of making the various review processes different.
- Never get same answer from two different people.
- No comments.
- None.
- Permitting/rezoning process is very lengthy.
- Plan review comments may be clear, but comments can indicate a lack of understanding by reviewer. Remember: 'seek first to understand?' Maybe the reason for 1 plan design is another design requirement. Put down the red pen & ask questions. I don't exactly submit back what comment you gave me because your comment exceeds the Ordin. Get off the high horse.
- Reduce costs.
- Review staff and inspectors seem to have trouble getting on the same page. There is too much "interpretation" on the inspectors' part and not enough of standing their ground on what they approved by the review staff.

- Reviewers should finish all projects (i.e. from first submittal to final approval) before moving to another position.
- See comments above.
- The county and city systems could be synced a little better.
- The EPlan review is great and saves time/paper/money; however the comments are sometimes difficult to understand, and it is hard to tell who made the comment. Initials could be added at the end of each comment.
- The land development staff and the rezoning staff at CMPC are generally very good. The only problem with rezonings is that it is probably the closest this to legalized blackmail for some of the things they ask for that go beyond the impact of the rezoning.
- The response to the question about the rezoning process reflects the Planning Department's process for rezoning, which should be revamped.
- The review fees currently being charged are nearly as much as the design professional is paid to design the project. This is like paying the editor of a book as much as you pay the author. My fear is these high fees are going to drive development out of Charlotte.
- The review fees seem excessively high. They appear more to me as a tax on development.
- The rezone process takes too long, and the fact that the city will only consider CDs in rezoning is ridiculous. This gives the city way too much power, and if a developer is not willing to do what staff requests, that developer is told to "find another site." The city does not care about commercial development, and only wants to protect the city.
- The subdivision process could be more streamlined. Once the plans are approved, they are reviewed again by some of the same reviewers as part of the platting process. It seems like the plat review could occur simultaneous with the plan review.
- The submittal process is not user-friendly for design professionals outside of Mecklenburg County. Not having an option to submit projects through the mail (UPS or FedEx) is disappointing. The number of sets required is also cumbersome. I would look to an electronic submission process.
- There needs to be change to the fee structure to account for small projects. The minimum fee is too costly for smaller projects.
- There needs to be more consistency in the storm water (PCCO) review. Often comments received during preliminary meetings are contradictory to comments made during formal reviews.
- Though consisting of a multitude of layers, the process moved quickly, and the Staff and Board members were straightforward.
- We have only had a pre-submittal meeting, so too early in process to have suggestions. So far, experience has been good.
- Zoning is not part of the Urban District Review process through the City. This creates a problem when you receive, for example, MUDD approval, then the plans go to the County for the building review, then Zoning has comments that in turn make you resubmit to the City. It's an inefficient process for everyone involved.
- Zoning review was not performed until MUDD approval was issued. I was told the zoning review was concurrent; however it was not initiated until MUDD approved plans were obtained even though Planning had approved the plans. MUDD approval was held up as result of NCDOT and CDOT.

How quickly you expect to get a response after leaving an e-mail or voice message with someone at the City offices - Other:

- 24 hours. (4)
- Days, sometimes never.
- Days.
- Depends on how I contact.
- I expect same day, but it's usually at least a day.
- Reasonable time based on how complicated the issue.
- Same day or less than 2 hours.
- What I expect is different than what is the response.
- Within 2 business days.
- Within a week.
- Within the week.
- Within two days.

How you prefer to communicate with the City personnel - Other:

- Depends what is being said.
- Email and phone.
- Phone when necessary, email to submit data.

Comments on Ordinance Alignment:

- Again, landscaping/tree ordinance is too cumbersome and has too many requirements - open space, tree save, landscaping, etc. I understand the need for landscaping, but the tree save and open space requirements make it difficult to fit a building on your site.
- Agreed that the land development ordinance requirements need to do a better job of dovetailing and minimizing conflicts between departments. Especially trees vs. light poles vs. utilities vs. driveway cuts, etc.
- All landscaping requirements should fall under one department such as urban forestry. Zoning reviews would be better as part of the land development review versus the building permitting. CDOT needs to be more familiar with city fire's truck maneuvering requirements.
- Better coord between FIRE and DOT (CDOT/NCDOT).
- Better explanations as to why.
- Case Managers assigned to a project helps keep things consistent and allows somebody in the city to maintain a common sense big picture perspective on decisions. Enforcement and cooperation are influenced by who the developer is and where the project is located. This observation is based on having worked with several in all areas of the city.
- City stormwater staff seem to live in their own little world - don't play well with others in EPM and planning.
- Consistency is appreciated. Also, do trees deserve all the focus they get? Attention to trees was excessive in our opinion.
- Definitions need to be consistent. For example, the zoning ordinance defines how to round numbers. Other ordinances consistently round up all numbers such as the number of required trees per the tree ordinance. Numbers should round the same way for everything.
- Develop a road map, with timeline and service fee, describing the process to customer.
- Form a stakeholder group to review the process and make changes.
- Get CDOT/NCDOT to cooperate.
- How the tree save ordinance affects the PED overlay district. The city wants strong streetscape in these areas, but the tree ordinance (though positive in its own right) contradicts this on the main streets.
- I feel the PCCO is not developer friendly on redevelopment type of projects or building additional projects. I have started to hear grumblings from various developers that they would much rather develop in other regions opposed to Charlotte because of it being so difficult to do any sort of redevelopment.
- I think that overall acreage for PCCO should remove land from the total that cannot be used to satisfy open space requirements. For example, if a 40 acre site has a 4 acre easement for power lines that cannot be used for undisturbed open space, that area should be discounted in the calculations.
- Improved Flexibility, Predictability and Clarity will be tremendous. Easily interpreted regulations will help with consistent interpretation.
- It would be a great idea, but the various people in the office and field will still have different interpretations of anything that is done.
- It would be helpful to have an overall development handbook (probably not including subdivision or zoning) that contains all of the other applicable ordinances in one format. Having to go to several links (especially for PCCO and Tree ordinance) makes it challenging to explain to clients where the information is coming from.
- I've got one that seems to border on ridiculous. Just adding lines to show people where I'd like them to park, I have to comply with the tree ordinance at a cost of about $8k. Now nothing changes except that I'm putting paint on the existing ground, and by doing so the City considers that I'm adding 10 spaces to the property!
- Just the fact that the City sees the need to maintain this alignment is good. I believe the City is progressive in the way it deals with interested developers; this is good for the City, good for the residents and good for the economy.

- Love how staff has looked for things to do in the downturn to justify their existence. It amazes me how private industry has had to cut back, and the City just keeps on trucking along. Just how many people can you hide in Storm Water Services?
- No real issues with Zoning, erosion control. Subdivision can be challenging because so many departments and ordinances are engaged. That process is not always intuitive. tree ordinance and PCCO, SWIM should be aligned.
- Not sure.
- Ordinance and staff needs to be more flexible, INCLUDING CDOT. Your bureaucracy, codes and programs are driving tax-paying businesses out of town and into the outlying areas.
- Please develop a PCCO that is less confusing and offers more fairness for treatment of existing conditions prior to 2007. It is very difficult to be a consultant/advisor to clients with the current PCCO.
- Please incorporate NCDOT into this process.
- Please minimize the conflicting goals between ordinances in an effort to decrease the cost of development.
- Quicker email or phone responses necessary here vs. permitting.
- Sidewalks on residential developments need to be part of the builder responsibility and required at CO of the house and not part of the development except for sidewalks on COS.
- Some reviewers are very responsive, and others require 2-3 days to get a response.
- Speed up the process.
- The tree ordinance is the least developer-friendly ordinance I have ever seen. Basically, the city could have achieved the same goal by taking imminent domain over 15% of the city. On a small site being developed, I have 2 options. Give the city 15% of property that I can no longer use, on top of reserving future ROW, or pay approx. $30K per site.
- There needs to be more uniformity between tree ordinance and PCCO.
- This effort will create the risk of additional restrictive regulations, which should be avoided. Clarity of the standards should be improved in the UDG-related standards. The Area Plans should be geo-referenced by parcel in order to make clear the required streetscape and setback requirements.
- This should be brought to an industry group who actually designs & builds. Only those caught in the maze can understand how the 'Silos' of City government overlap & cause hell to the private sector. IF staff is open-minded, they could learn something. Group should NOT be led by <NAME> or any other Silo department head - too protection-ist.
- We have only had a pre-submittal meeting, so too early in process to have suggestions. So far, experience has been good.
- When an existing building has the potential to get some money for an improvement - the various other issues - tree ordinance etc. cause it to be too costly, and the job falls apart due to constraints.
- Zoning definitely needs to be involved upfront, even if there are not buildings. Buffers, setbacks, driveways, all impact site development. Too many times there is a zoning issue after it goes thru engineer review.

What the City of Charlotte Land Development Department do to better serve you:

- Be more responsive, and make redevelopment less costly to developers. Storm water requirements for redevelopment from pavement to building should not count as new built upon area and should have reduced storm water criteria.
- Concurrent reviews for civil plans...e/c, storm water, CDOT, CMUD, Zoning, Building Standards, Urban Forestry, Fire, etc. With so many departments looking at our plans, it would benefit everyone to submit to one place, one time.
- Consistency. CDOT especially. Different interpretations in rezoning versus permitting. Fix ACCELA so I can see progress daily. Provide email alerts when reviewers approve/disapprove.
- Continue to consider the overall process that the developer faces, and assist with the interfaces between Land Development and other County/City Departments.
- Continue to work closely with designers and developers to make the review timeframes and approvals more closely match the complexity of the project.
- Dealing with the PCCO continues to be a source of frustration. Conceptual projects seem to require input from city staff on a regular basis to have confidence about how the PCCO will be applied. Consistency across the board and a written policy that the design community can rely on without having to get staff input every time would be very helpful.
- Decrease the cost of development.
- Extend training and use of the EPlan system (most departments are very good now), coordinate with LUESA and surrounding communities on the same training (some of those are not well-versed), and simplify stormwater countywide. Overall, Land Development gets very high marks.
- Have all departments present at pre-submittal meetings. Return e-mails and/or phone calls promptly.
- I am very impressed w/land development...particularly the job the gatekeepers do. Those Friday prelim meetings are very thorough!
- I have been extremely satisfied with the service that I have received from Land Development. They in several instances have gone to great lengths to help.
- Increase and streamline communication.
- I've already named names. Provide us a place to disagree with staff without repercussion.
- Keep designers abreast of all ordinance changes that relate to the site in a timely manner and a clear manner. Sometimes we are unaware of changes that significantly impact our design, especially the PCCO, and its somewhat vague grandfathering.
- Keep up the good work.
- Like I noted, the land dev. section is fantastic to work with. I know who to call and ask questions because they are usually the consistent ones and will return calls. There are some that don't care, and I try to avoid them. CDOT is a prime example.
- Limit the redline process to a single review and not have a 2nd set of redlines to deal with after the plat has been resubmitted.
- Lower the review fees, and reduce the review times.
- Maintain pre-submittal reviews.
- Please find a way to include a review by Zoning during City reviews. It is debilitating to receive a site permit and then have to make significant changes to the site when Zoning reviews during the Building Standards review. If zoning is reviewing the site, it should occur with the City review.
- Provide better consistency in review from project to project.
- Provide electronic file sharing, plan submission.

- Quicker responses to questions and quicker review times on small projects.
- Quicker reviews and quicker return phone calls.
- Reduce review cycle to 2 weeks instead of 30 days.
- Reduce the review process time. Adjust fee structure for smaller projects.
- Return calls and e-mails the same day. Just this week I have called someone twice, left a message both times, with no return call. Is it possible for staff to change their voicemail to say they are out of the office when we call them directly. Otherwise, we don't know they are out.
- Return phone calls and emails in a timely fashion.
- Return phone calls, have flexibility, understand the needs of their customer, understand that code is not always black and white, and it's ok to think outside the box. Make a decision and stand by it, get rid of CD zoning, start giving more and taking less, understand that new business generates revenue for the city, and new trees don't...for starters.
- See comments in Item 15 above.
- Simplify the ordinance.
- Speed up approval process.
- Stop charging renewal and add-on fees.
- The building and inspection process in general seems to change year to year and seems to have changed so much over the 12 years I have worked here that it is difficult to describe the required processes for others.
- The review staff and inspectors need to work together to be consistent. If the city approves plans, the inspector's job is not to interpret them to their liking; it's to make sure the project meets the plans, not their personal interpretations.
- Use more common sense.
- We have only had a pre-submittal meeting, so too early in process to have suggestions. So far, experience has been good.
- Work with business to try to help them bring jobs and revenue into Charlotte. My experience has been that the government just doesn't care. Unfortunately, when the City makes it difficult to do business, business people will just take their business elsewhere, and that doesn't do the city or its residents and tax base any good at all.
- You have down a fine job so far.

Additional Comment

One customer sent an e-mail apologizing for not being able to complete the survey. However, the customer did provide this comment in the e-mail to share:

"We had put in for a fast track and got a refund because that wasn't met. The issue was a path in front of the property which we offered to bond and agree to the specks at the time, that didn't work and with that delay and the fire dept cost overruns of $300,000 we opted not to proceed with the project.
Sorry I don't have time to fill out the survey."

City of Charlotte

2012 Land Development Customer Satisfaction Survey

Original Cover E-mail and Survey

CHARLOTTE

City of Charlotte

Land Development Permitting Customer Satisfaction Survey

Dear City of Charlotte Client,

As a valued member of the business community and a client of the City of Charlotte's Land Development Permitting process, you are invited to participate in our customer satisfaction survey.

This 2-page survey should take no more than 6-8 minutes to complete. Charlotte-based Customer Service Solutions, Inc. (CSS) is conducting this survey on behalf of the City of Charlotte.

Please click here to take this short survey

If you encounter any problems in completing this survey, please contact CSS at charlotte@cssamerica.com.

Thank you for your time in taking this survey and helping the City of Charlotte to continuously improve its programs and services!

Sincerely,

Edward Gagnon
Customer Service Solutions, Inc.

SafeUnsubscribe

Trusted Email from Constant Contact FREE
Try it FREE today.

This email was sent to ed.gagnon@cssamerica.com by ed.gagnon@cssamerica.com | Update Profile/Email Address | Instant removal with SafeUnsubscribe™ | Privacy Policy.

CSS, Inc. | 3427 Teversham Lane | Charlotte | NC | 28210

City of Charlotte
Permitting Customer Satisfaction Survey

Customer Service Solutions, Inc. is conducting this survey and will keep your responses completely confidential.

Your response to this survey will help us to serve you better! Please base your responses on personal experiences you have had with the City of Charlotte **in the past 2 years.**

Important!
Please check the box indicating your PRIMARY viewpoint for completing this survey:

Commercial Construction **Residential Construction**

Please describe your primary role as a customer of the permitting process (**select ONLY ONE**):

Owner Developer Homebuilder General Contractor
Project Manager Design Professional Other _____

Instructions

1. Please specify your **Level of Agreement** with the following statements about **CITY** operations by placing an X in the appropriate box for each statement.
2. **Special Note**: For any **Inspection questions,** focus on inspections that relate to Urban Forestry, Zoning, Soil/Erosion Control, and City Engineering.

This Section pertains only to the City of Charlotte, enforcing Charlotte local ordinances

Staff Evaluation	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
City staff are consistently courteous						
City staff are consistently professional						
City staff listen and understand my point of view before making their decision						
City staff listen and assist me with all ordinance-related questions.						
City staff listen to and resolve my issues fairly.						
The **City of Charlotte Administrative Staff** return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.						
The **City of Charlotte's Inspectors** return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.						
The **City of Charlotte's Plan Review Staff** return phone calls and emails in a timely manner.						

Please provide any comments, including suggestions on how to improve any of these Staff-related items:

_____

_____

Process Evaluation	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
Commercial pre-submittal meetings help me to submit more complete and accurate plans.						
I am pleased with my ability to quickly reach the right person to address the reason for my call						
It is easy to access permit information via the Website						
It is easy to check on the status of my review						
It is easy to access other forms on the Website						
It is easy to make payments						
It is easy to schedule inspections						
The City has a timely review process						
I am satisfied with the length of time from when we submit plans until when we've heard the results of the review.						
The City has a timely inspections process						

Please provide any comments, including suggestions on how to improve any of these Process-related items:

_____

_____

Service Evaluation	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
I am satisfied with the **City of Charlotte's Expedited Commercial Review Process.**						
I am satisfied with the **City of Charlotte's Rezoning Process** overall.						
I am satisfied with the **City of Charlotte's Urban District Review Process** overall (incl. UMUD, MUDD, PED, TOD,RE-3, and TS).						
I am satisfied with the **City's commercial Permitting Processes** overall.						
I am satisfied with the **City's subdivision Permitting Processes** overall.						
I would tell other building professionals that the **City of Charlotte** is a good jurisdiction in which to work.						
Plan review comments identify clearly what needs to be corrected to receive approvals.						
There is consistency between what's approved during the City plan review process and what's approved by City field inspectors.						

Please provide any comments, including suggestions on how to improve any of these Service-related items:

_____

_____

Background Information

Did you participate in a survey very similar to this two years ago? Yes No Not Sure

How long have you been working with the **City** in permitting situations?

Less than 1 year 1-2 years 3-5 years More than 5 years

Are you typically a primary contact for plan reviews/permitting? Yes No

Are you typically a primary contact for inspections? Yes No

How quickly do you expect to get a response after leaving an e-mail or voice message with someone at the **City** offices?

30 minutes 2 hours Same Day Next Day Other _____

How do you prefer to communicate with the **City** personnel? **(**Mark only **one)**

☐ E-mail ☐ Phone ☐ Face-to-face Meeting ☐ Other: _____

Additional Information and Feedback Requests

City staff is currently working on a new initiative regarding "Ordinance Alignment" where we are seeking to improve our land development ordinances including Zoning, Subdivision, Tree, Erosion Control, and PCCO. Through these improvements we seek to improve flexibility, predictability and clarity by addressing any misalignments, overlaps and/or gaps in our ordinances. Please provide any suggestions you have to this end.

_____

_____

_____

About how many employees does your company have on payroll? 1-10 11-25 26-50 51-100 Over 100

About how many times did you submit a **new** project to the **City of Charlotte** within the **past 12 months** (this could include Subdivision, Expedited Commercial, Urban District, etc.)? 0 – 5 6 – 10 11 – 20 >20

What can the **City of Charlotte Land Development Department** do to better serve you?

1. _____

2. _____

You May Request a Contact from a City of Charlotte Land Development Representative

Would you like someone from **THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE** to contact you to discuss any aspect of the permitting process?
Yes No

If you answered "Yes" to either question, please complete the following:

Your Name: _____ Company: _____ Phone #: _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Results will be used to help the **City of Charlotte** improve service to the business community.